



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Sacramento District

Public Notice

Corps Number: 200500258

Date: February 6, 2006

Comments Due: March 9, 2006

Subject: The US Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District, (Corps) is evaluating a permit application to dredge a segment of the Walker River. This notice informs interested parties of the proposed activity and to solicit comments. This notice may also be viewed at the Corps web site at <http://www.spk.usace.army.mil/regulatory.html>.

Authority: This application is being evaluated under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act for the discharge of dredged or fill material in waters of the United States.

Applicant: Tom Reviglio
950 South Rock Boulevard
Sparks, Nevada 89431-5922
Phone: 775-359-5800

Location: The project site is located in northwest of Yerington in Sections 2, 10, & 11, Township 13 North, Range 25 East, Lyon County, Nevada, on the Mason Butte and Yerington USGS Topographic Quadrangles.

Project Description: The applicant is proposing to suction dredge approximately 2.35 miles of the Walker River near Yerington using a new dredging technique in this region. This technique has been successfully used along several areas on the Mississippi River to remove accumulated sediments. Overall, the project will not likely involve regulated discharges other than return flows from the sedimentation basin, however there is a need to obtain authorization to accommodate regulated discharges that could occur while working in the Walker River using this technique.

The dredging will start near the dam / weir located about a mile north of the Yerington Municipal Airport and terminate at the Goldfield Bridge. The applicant intends to set the suction barge dredge into the Walker River, near the dam, via crane. If there are logistic problems with using a crane to set the dredge in the river, an access ramp may need to be created which could involve a regulated discharge. The dredge's dimensions are 12' wide, 20' long, and 4' deep; it has a 14" suction opening and is powered by a 200hp electric motor.

The out-take from the dredge will be pumped to a settling basin in an upland over 1000 feet from the river (see attached sheet 1 of 2) via 12" polyethylene (HDPE) pipe. The "dirty" water solution will pass through a sand / water separation area (settling basin) where the sediments will resettle and the supernatant water will flow back into the river, probably via another HDPE pipe. The basin will include three connected "cells:" the main settling out cell; a primary settling cell; and a secondary cell. The last cell will then be collected into an outfall pipe and be directed back into the river via gravity flow. The settling basin will contain berms of sufficient height to contain all water pumped from the dredge.

The operating principle is that as the suction dredge withdraws water from the river, the cleaner water will have a lower concentration of solutes (dissolved solids) and through diffusion, there will be an osmotic migration or movement of solutes from a higher concentration region to a lower concentration area (near the dredge). This will re-suspend deposited sediments which will then be removed by the suction dredge. Larger sediments, such as gravels and cobbles, will not be removed from the river system.

It is anticipated that the dredge will need to be moved 400-600 feet depending on how easily upstream material is osmotically "pulled" from the river substrate. As one segment of the river is dredged, the barge will be moved upstream to dredge the next segment of river. It is estimated that approximately 100,000 cubic yards of fine accumulated sediment material (particles sand size and smaller) will be removed. This is based on the average river width of 60 feet and 2.35 miles of suction dredging and the need to remove approximately 14 sediment bars averaging 40 feet wide and 400 feet long.

Because of the nature of this project, it is not practical to show the numerous cross sections of the river and the large scale aerial photos of the proposed project area. Those wishing this additional information need to visit the Reno Regulatory Office to view these documents. The attached drawings do show project location and a top view of the sedimentation basin.

Other unanticipated and potentially regulated discharges that are not proposed but could occur is using an energy dissipater riprap apron at the discharge point carrying the supernatant water back to the river. This rock riprap, if needed, would dissipate erosive energies from the discharge pipe. Additionally, there is a small possibility that some mechanical removal of aquatic root masses from accumulated sandbars may be needed and this could result in a regulated discharge.

Project Purpose and Need: The overall project purpose is to restore the conveyance capacity of the Walker River. There is a need to remove about 3 feet of accumulated river sediment that has created a situation where the city of Yerington is lower than the substrate of the river. A major flood event would like overtop the river, back up irrigation canals, and cause flooding in Yerington.

Background Information: Last year's flooding caused several community leaders to address this increasingly threatening situation. Minor flooding occurred and water backed up in several canals. A large amount of sediment was been deposited after the 1997 storm events and every year since then, sediment from upstream has settled because flow restrictions from the "airport" weir. This proposal is scaled back from what was originally proposed. It was determined best to evaluate the results of this new (to this region) technique for removing sediment from a smaller reach of the river before attempting to remove Walker River sediments on a larger scale.

Environmental Setting. The segment of river to be dredged is surrounded by a very thin riparian zone, mostly cottonwood trees (some very mature) and many coyote willows. Farming is active and intense on both sides of the river; there are many diversions off the Walker River to support this intense farming activity. There are many segments along the river where the riparian zone has been completely removed. This appears to be one of the primary reasons there is a sedimentation problem in the river. The weir at the beginning of the proposed project (at the downstream-most point) appears to be slowing the water the most and, thus, is responsible for much sediment deposition.

Water Quality Certification: Water quality certification or a waiver is required under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act. Impacts to the states water quality will be evaluated and assessed by the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection.

Historic Properties: Based on the available information and previous Corps permitting actions, cultural resources are not expected to be within the project's area of potential effect.

Endangered Species: Based on the Corps' preliminary review, we have determined that the proposed project will not affect any Federally-listed threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat protected by the Endangered Species Act.

Evaluation Factors: The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts, of the described activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The

benefit, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the described activity, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the described activity will be considered, including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, consideration of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. The activity's impact on the public interest will include application of the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency (40 CFR Part 230).

The Corps is soliciting comments from the public, Federal, State, and local agencies and officials, Indian tribes, and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps to determine whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Submitting Comments: If you have questions or need additional information please contact the applicant or the Corps' project manager (below). Please submit written comments, referencing Corps number 200500258, on or before March 9, 2006 to:

Richard Gebhart, Project Manager
US Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District
Reno Regulatory Office
300 Booth Street, Room 2103
Reno, Nevada 89509-1361
Email: Richard.A.Gebhart@usace.army.mil
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The Corps is particularly interested in receiving comments related to the proposal's probable impacts on the affected aquatic environment and the secondary and cumulative effects. Please note that all comment letters received are subject to release to the public through the Freedom of Information Act.

Public Hearing: Anyone may request, in writing, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests shall specifically state, with particularity, the reason(s) for holding a public hearing. If the Corps determines that the information received in response to this notice is inadequate for thorough evaluation, a public hearing may be warranted. If a public hearing is warranted, interested parties will be notified of the time, date, and location.

Attachments: Two pages of drawings.